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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Thursday, October 29, 2009

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee

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Professional Standard Committee
Minutes from October 29, 2009
4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Bush 105

Next meeting: Thursday, November 5 in Bush 105.

The meeting was convened at 4 p.m. by Thomas Moore. Faculty members present were Josh Almond, Erich Blossey, Marc Fetscherin, Emily Russell, Claire Strom, and Anca Voicu. Dean Laurie Joyner and student member Billy Kennedy were also present.

- 1) We discussed a request for appeal from an unsuccessful applicant for FYRST support; the application was not considered because of missing reports from previous grants. This specific case prompted a larger policy discussion regarding penalties for failure to submit reports for past grants. According to the current grant guidelines, the “committee will not review proposals . . . From faculty members who have not submitted a Mid-Year Progress Report and/or Final Report on the outcomes of previous grant awards.” During its review of applications, the committee agreed that while it is essential to maintain rules blocking consideration for failure to follow guidelines, there should be a way to address past failures in order to avoid being penalized in perpetuity. Our discussion centered on how to balance these interests. In determining the length of the penalty phase, we discussed several possibilities, including one academic year, one grant cycle, six months, and nine months. J. Almond and E. Russell agreed that it was important to neither privilege (through allowing application in the next grant cycle, i.e. January) nor penalize (i.e. withhold right to application for one year or nine months, thus excluding for two academic years) faculty eligible for fall funding because of full-year sabbatical plans. C. Strom emphasized the need for the policy to be rigorous and stressed the importance of upholding application guidelines and standards; applicants should not be able to submit missing reports in August and apply for funding in October. A. Voicu noted the significance of upholding these guidelines as a culture change at Rollins and argued for the need to inform colleagues of these changes in anticipation of the January 2010 application deadline.

The committee agreed on the following language:

“Grant applicants who have failed to submit a Mid Year Progress and/or Final Report for past grants are ineligible for consideration. They will become eligible to apply six months after the Dean’s Office receives their past-due report(s).” C. Strom moved and J. Almond seconded; the committee unanimously approved the motion.

- 2) Old Business
 - a. Open Access Journals (Strom)—C. Strom will work with J. Miller, Library Director, to draft policy language and will bring it back to the committee.
 - b. Feedback to administrators—tabled to next week
 - c. Evaluation of teaching (Blossey)—E. Blossey distributed a memo (attached) on changes to the peer review of faculty system.
 - d. CIE tutorial

- 3) New Business—all New Business (excluding guidelines for considering grants) tabled for future meetings
 - a. Guidance on materials for tenure and promotion
 - b. Guidelines for considering grants (penalties for non-reporting, PTR, 3-year rule, etc.)
 - c. Course load equation
 - d. Grade inflation
 - e. Criteria for sabbatical
- 4) Meeting was adjourned by T. Moore at 5pm.

Respectfully submitted by Emily Russell
Attachments (1)

Professional Standards Committee—Submitted by Erich Blossey

Peer Review Evaluation of Faculty

Recognizing the national trend of decreasing the emphasis placed on student evaluations of teaching (CIE) and the apparent overemphasis that Rollins College places on these instruments, we wish to examine methods to improve the faculty evaluation system. The process of instituting a comprehensive peer review evaluation system is complex and will not necessarily occur immediately. Some steps that will improve the current system are:

1. Insure that departmental evaluation committees and faculty salary council place greater emphasis on peer evaluation with concomitant reduction in that of student evaluations. This requires only the following of the Faculty Bylaws where the departmental evaluation committees use evaluations conducted by its members (peers), and if, prescribed, other members of the department.
2. Examine the CIE as to campus-wide evaluations in which averages on quantitative responses are abnormally high (course overall averages of 4.6/5.0).
3. Change the proportion of faculty evaluations that have greater than 75% to 100% of the evaluation based on the CIE. Suggested ratio: 25% student evaluation: 75% peer/other evaluation.

Future Suggestions for Development of Peer Review Evaluation:

1. Explore other institutions that have peer review evaluations in place.
2. Develop standards of performance: what are the expectations for a meritorious instructor?
 - a. Syllabus: is it complete and meets standards set-forth here before.
 - b. Assessments of teaching/ learning: what type and number of instruments for assessment of learning has the instructor used?
 - c. What is the atmosphere in the instructor's classroom? Is it one of engaged and active learning or is the "Sage-on-the-Stage?"
 - d. Does the instructor have a final assessment appropriate to the course description?
 - e. A follow-up on the performance the instructor's students in other classes: does the student appear to have retained some of the more salient points of the previous course and can apply these to a higher-level course?
3. Peer evaluation of scholarship:
 - a. Is the instructor actively pursuing scholarship within the discipline or scholarship of teaching?
 - b. Does the quality and quantity of scholarship meet and/or exceed the departmental criteria?
 - c. More?
4. Peer evaluation of service:
 - a. Does the individual perform expected service chores within the department?
 - i. Advising aspect: Does the instructor provide adequate (or better) advice to his/her students?
 - ii. Other departmental tasks.

- iii. Service to the College: what roles has the instructor filled in the government structure: from informal task forces, membership on various committees, and, of course, faculty governance.
- iv. Service to the community : inside and outside the College.

All of the peer review evaluations must be both informative and constructive to the instructor.